

**COOPERATIVE FORECASTING GROUP**

**10:00 A.M.**

**Wednesday, April 21, 2010**

**Baltimore Metropolitan Council  
2700 Lighthouse Point East, Suite 310  
Conference Room A**

**ATTENDANCE**

Jeff Bronow – Howard County Department of Planning	410-313-2354
Richard Campbell – Anne Arundel County Department of Planning	410-222-7255
Mark Goldstein – Maryland Department of Planning	410-767-4454
Scott Graf – Carroll County Department of Planning	410-386-2145
Seema Iyer – Baltimore City Department of Planning	410-396-7272
James Palma – Maryland Department of Planning	410-767-4888
Dan Rooney – Harford County Department of Planning	410-638-3103
Kui Zhao – Baltimore County Department of Planning	410-887-3521
Margret Kaii-Ziegler - Anne Arundel County Department of Planning	410-222-7462
Ed Cohen – TRAC	410-837-6582

**BMC Staff Members**

Charles Baber – Baltimore Metropolitan Council	410-732-0500x1056
Victor Bonaparte – Baltimore Metropolitan Council	410-732-0500x1036
Jamie Bridges – Baltimore Metropolitan Council	410-732-0500x1053
Dunbar Brooks – Baltimore Metropolitan Council	410-732-9574
Nancy Jones – Baltimore Metropolitan Council	410-732-0500x1025
Todd Lang – Baltimore Metropolitan Council	410-732-9566
Mary Logan – Baltimore Metropolitan Council	410-732-1059
Jody McCullough – Baltimore Metropolitan Council	410-732-0500x1049

The Chairperson, Dan Rooney, convened the meeting at 10:10 A.M.

**APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 17, 2010 MINUTES:** Scott Graf moved for the approval of the Cooperative Forecasting Group (CFG) minutes of the February 17th meeting with minor text corrections. The motion was seconded by Kui Zhao. The minutes were approved.

**STATUS REPORT ON THE BALTIMORE REGION VISION PROCESS:** Jody McCullough, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC), briefed the Committee on the activities planned for the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) vision process. She said that six (6) workshops are scheduled to take place during the end of April and the

first weeks of May. BMC staff, Portfolio Associates (planning consultants), local planning staff and elected officials will meet with community residents in each jurisdiction in the Baltimore region to explain the vision process. Additionally, a values survey will be administered to collect participant values. These values will form the basis of the 2060 Vision and shape the underlining goals and policies that will guide the development of the 2011 long-range transportation plan. She thanked CFG members for their contributions to developing the Demographic Changes and Economic Development topic paper. This document will provide background information for workshop participants. For interested folks who are unable to attend the workshop and/or need more information, the BMC has set up a website, [Imagine 2060.com](http://Imagine2060.com). An on-line version of the values survey can be completed at the website site. Later in June, a broader series of community meetings are planned where participants, using the index tool, will be able to see how their transportation and residential choices affect the health and growth of the region.

**REPORT ON DOWNTOWN COLUMBIA PLAN:** Jeff Bronow presented a PowerPoint presentation on the history of the past and future development of Columbia, Maryland. The Rouse plan that created a New Town in Howard County more than 40 years ago has been amended to allow more extensive and dense development. The Howard County Council approved both the General Plan Amendment and the Zoning Regulation Amendment bill earlier in the year and County Executive Ken Ulman, an early supporter of the measures, signed them into law. The developer, General Growth Properties (GGP), plans to spearhead the move to “in-fill” downtown Columbia with a denser mix of residential and retail uses. In summary, the approved plan allows for 5,500 new housing units, 4.3 million square feet of office/hotel space, 1.25 million square feet of retail, 20-story structures, renovation of the Merriweather Post Pavilion and its environs and workforce housing and transit-oriented amenities. The process that culminated in these new regulations began in 2005 when discussions about creating greater density in downtown Columbia began to surface. Later, a charrette was held to provide more opportunity for broad based focused discussion of proposals and concerns. The charrette was followed by a series of community working sessions that saw a rising tide of support for amending the current Rouse plan for Downtown Columbia. GGP acquired the Rouse property rights and took the General Plan and zoning amendments to the County Council.

**REPORT ON HOUSING SALES IN THE BALTIMORE REGION:** Victor Bonaparte, BMC, presented a PowerPoint presentation on housing sales in the Baltimore region 2006-2009. His report is an update of the quarterly tracking of housing sales from January 2006 to date. The data was extracted from sales data published by the MLS Regional Information System. It includes monthly sales (closing dates) of new and existing homes grouped by sales price in intervals of \$100,000. The report also included annual median sales prices during the same four-year period. Mr. Bonaparte said that the data mirrors national trends. The number of sales and the median price of homes have declined sharply since 2006. While monthly sales trends, more sales in May, June and July, have remained constant; there were more year-end sales in 2009 than the four year average. This abnormality is traced to recent federal programs designed to stimulate sales and slow the three-year declining volume. In any case, the 2009 median sales price for each county in the region was lower than its 2006 counterpoint. For the jurisdictions in the region, the price point spread was about 14%, down by 4% for Baltimore City and 18% for Carroll County. These eroding market values will increase downward pressure on assessed values, contributing to slow revenue growth for state and local governments in the fiscal years ahead.

**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING PRESENTATION:** Jim Palma, Maryland Department of Planning, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Federal Housing Finance Agency's (FHFA) Home Price Index for Maryland. He noted that the FHFA home price index measures change in the price of single-family detached homes that are sold at least twice and are financed by conventional conforming loans. The data was extracted from Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae mortgage data. He made several important points about what the data revealed. First, the percentage of mortgage volume used to purchase housing in the U. S. has declined significantly since the first quarter of 2000 when it peaked at about 75%. For the first quarter of 2009, it fell to about 9%. In Maryland, the housing values decline between 1993 and 2000, peaking of 120% on the housing price Index in 2007 then falling to about 60% in 2009. In Maryland, home prices increased by 115% from 2000 to 2007. Only four states ranked higher. Between 2007 and 2009, Maryland home prices fell 26%, only five states fell lower.

**DISCUSSION ON 2010 STATUS OF CENSUS PARTICIPANT STATISTICAL AREAS PROGRAM REVIEW:** Nancy Jones, BMC, briefed the Committee on the Census Participant Statistical Areas Program review (PSAP). She said that all jurisdictions have completed their review of the verification files. Based on their findings, Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County and Howard County have submitted changes to the Census Bureau. The Bureau plans to review the changes through mid-June. If questions should arise, Census staff for the Philadelphia Regional Office will contact Ms. Jones directly. It is unlikely that the Bureau will challenge Block Group changes. CDP changes require a more formal review and the approval of Census headquarters. Ms. Jones will contact the Philadelphia Census office from time to time to determine the status of their review and relay the pertinent information to the appropriate jurisdiction's representative. The boundary file is available on the BMC website. Mr. Brooks noted that the Bureau has picked February 2011 as the release date for block data. He added that the Bureau will send the finalized block groups to local jurisdictions who will in turn assign TAZ numbers to them.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** Mr. Brooks distributed a chart of the updated Round 7-C Cooperative Forecast controls. He asked CFG members to review the chart to insure that their submissions are correctly displayed. He also distributed the Demographic Changes and Economic Development topic paper developed as background information for the *Imagine 2060* visioning process. He thanked CFG members for their assistance. The demographic write-ups they prepared during the early planning stages of the visioning process became the foundation of the topic paper.

Mr. Brooks added that he is still attempting to get the necessary state approval to use the ES202. There are confidentiality issues that must be resolved before DLLR will release the file to us.

Having no further business, the CFG meeting adjourned at 12:10 P.M.

**Next CFG Meeting – June 16, 2010**